

Message Text

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42

ACTION NEA-16

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-04

RSC-01 USIA-15 PRS-01 SP-03 EB-11 FEA-02 INT-08 SCI-06

ACDA-19 COME-00 EUR-25 DRC-01 /123 W

----- 071959

R 291143Z MAY 74

FM AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1050

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

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E.O. 11652N/A

TAGS: ENRG, CE

SUBJ: ALLEGED CEYLONese OIL DISCOVERY

REF: STATE 109239 NOTAL; COLOMBO 382

1. DESPITE PRESS REPORTS, SRI LANKA HAS NOT STRUCK OIL. WIRE SERVICES DOUBTLESS PICKED UP EXAGGERATED PLAY IN LOCAL PAPERS REPORTING MAY 20 PRESS CONFERENCE BY CHAIRMAN CEYLON PETROLEUM CORPORATION (CPC) COOMARASWAMY CONCERNING NEXT STEPS IN MANNAR/PALK STRAITS EXPLORATION. MAY 21 CEYLON DAILY MIRROR BANNERED "/SRI LANKA STRIKES OIL" BUT ACCOMPANYING TEXT ANC CEYLON DAILY NEWS ACCOUNT ACCURATELY REFLECTED MORE MODERATE AND COMPLETE PRESS CONFERENCE CONTENTS, INCLUDING FOLLOWING KEY POINTS:

A) CONFERENCE WAS OCCASIONED BY CPC SIGNING

TWO ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS WITH TECHNO-EXPORT OF USSR FOR LAND AND MARINE SEISMIC SURVEYS;

B) COORMARASWAMY SAID: "ENCOURAGED BY RESULTS (OF STRATOGRAPHIC DRILLING) SO FAR OBTAINED AND IN

KEEPING WITH GOVERNMENT'S POLICY WE ARE NOT EXPANDING OUR ACTIVITIES IN SEARCH OF OIL DEPOSITS". COOMARASWAMY ALSO SPOKE OBVIOUS TRUISMS THAT OIL FOUND SHOULD BE COMMERCIALY EXPLOITABLE AND OIL WOULD BE MAJOR BOON TO SRI LANKA, BUT HE ADDED THAT:

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"...WE MUST BE PATIENT".

2. CPC VICE CHAIRMAN CONFIRMED TO EMBOFF THAT CEYLON
DIALY NEWS ARTICLE ACCURATELY SUMMARIZES BOTH
COOMARAWWAMY'S NEWS CONFERENCE AND ACTUAL CURRENT STAGE
OF OIL EXPLORATION. AN ADDITIONAL INSIGHT ON UNCERTAINTY OF
CEYLON'S OIL PROSPECTS WAS GIVEN BY MINISTRY OF DEFENCE AND FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OFFICE WHO POINTED OUT TO EMBOFF THAT GSL, UNWILLING
TO UNDERWRITE WHOLE EXPLORATION PROCESS, WAS PROCEEDING IN VERY
CAUTIOUS, STEP-BY-STEP MANNER.

3. WE WILL FORWARD CLIPPINGS, WHICH HAVE FURTHER
TECHNICAL DETAILS, TO DELHI AND WASHINGTON.
VAN HOLLEN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
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Concepts: PETROLEUM INDUSTRY, OIL FIELDS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 29 MAY 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: boyleja
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974COLOMB01449
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740135-0002
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30 JUN 2005

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